

(h) Decide all personnel actions on merit principles in a manner which will demonstrative affirmative equal employment opportunity for the organization;

(i) Ensure the greatest possible utilization and development of the skills and potential ability of all employees;

(j) Track applicant flow and promptly take or recommend appropriate action to overcome any impediment to the achievement of the objectives of the EEO/AE programs; and

(k) Provide recognition to employees, supervisors, managers and units demonstrating superior accomplishment in equal employment opportunity.

§ 7.15 Responsibilities of managers and supervisors.

All managers and supervisors of the Department are responsible for:

(a) Removing barriers to EEO and ensuring that Affirmative Employment objectives are accomplished in their areas of responsibility;

(b) Evaluating subordinate managers and supervisors on their performance of EEO/AE responsibilities;

(c) Encouraging and taking positive steps to ensure respect for and acceptance of minorities, women and persons with disabilities, veterans and others of diverse characteristics in the work force;

(d) Providing for the non-discriminatory treatment of all employees and for providing full and fair opportunity for all employees in obtaining employment and career advancement, including support for F.A.I.R., the Upward Mobility Program, the Mentoring Program and the Individual Development Plan;

(e) Encouraging and authorizing staff participation in the various Diversity Program observances;

(f) Being proactive in addressing EEO/AE issues, and for work environments that encourage and support complaint avoidance through sound management and personnel practices;

(g) Resolving complaints of discrimination early in the EEO process either independently, or through the use of alternate dispute resolution techniques, when it is the right thing to do and when it represents a sound business decision; and

(h) Making reasonable accommodation to the religious and disability needs of applicants and employees when those accommodations can be made without undue hardship on the business of the agency.

§ 7.16 Responsibilities of employees.

All employees of the Department are responsible for:

(a) Being informed as to the Department's EEO/AE programs;

(b) Adopting an attitude of full acceptance of minority, female and disabled group associates, and support of F.A.I.R.;

(c) Providing equality of treatment of, and service to, all citizens with whom they come in contact in carrying out their job responsibilities; and

(d) Providing assistance to supervisors and managers in carrying out their responsibilities in the EEO/AE programs.

PRECOMPLAINT PROCESSING

§ 7.25 Precomplaint processing.

The regulations in 29 CFR 1614.105, concerning precomplaint processing shall apply.

COMPLAINTS

§ 7.30 Presentation of complaint.

At any stage in the presentation of a complaint, including the counseling stage, the Complainant shall be free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal and shall have the right to be accompanied, represented, and advised by a representative of the Complainant's own choosing, except as limited by 29 CFR 1614.605. If the Complainant is an employee of the Department, the employee shall have a reasonable amount of official time to present the complaint if the employee is otherwise in an active duty status. If the Complainant is an employee of the Department and designates another employee of the Department as Complainant's representative, the representative shall be free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal, and